DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 326 912 CS 507 355

AUTHOR Mild, Robert E., Jr.
TITLE An Analysis of Conflict Management in Grades 3 through 8.
PUB DATE Nov 90
NOTE 37p.; Published by EDINFO Press.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Information Analyses - ERIC Information Analysis Products (071)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Classroom Communication; Classroom Environment; Classroom Research; *Classroom Techniques; *Conflict; *Conflict Resolution; Educational Research; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; Methods Research; Problem Solving; Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS *Conflict Management; Conflict Management Style

ABSTRACT

This study examined eight research questions designed to measure students' perceptions of conflict management in the classroom (grades three through eight). In addition to assessing students' satisfaction with the particular conflict management strategies, student self-concept was also measured to determine if the level of self-concept had any bearing on the students' degree of satisfaction. Subjects for this study were 178 students enrolled in grades three through eight of a school system located outside of a small, midwestern city. Results indicated that several of the questions produced significant results that led to an improvement of conflict management in the classroom. Although the findings of this research are not as straightforward as they might be, several of the results do improve on the picture of conflict management in the classroom. Strategy F, mutuality of concern, was the conflict management technique that was most often identified by the students. Strategy B, the invoking of class rules, also received considerable support from the students. Now that certain strategies have been identified, teachers may be in a better position to use these conflict-managing techniques to their advantage in dealing with problems that arise in the classroom. By effective application, the teacher should be making improvements toward creation of a more pleasant, more productive educational environment for both student and teacher alike. (Fourteen tables of data are included and 17 references are attached.) (MG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED326912

AN ANALYSIS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN GRADES 3 THROUGH 8

Robert E. Mild, Jr.
Department of Speech Communication
Fairmont State College
Fairmont, West Virginia 26554
304-367-4167

Paper presented to the Speech Communication Association Convention, Chicago, Illinois, November, 1990

CS507355

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Robert E. Mild, Jr.
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

An Analysis of Conflict Management
in Grades 3 through 8

Abstract

This paper reports on the findings of a study examining various aspects of conflict management in grades 3 through 8. A series of eight (8) research questions designed to measure students' perceptions of conflict management in the classroom were posed. In addition to assessing student satisfaction with the particular conflict management strategies, student self-concept was also measured to determine if level of self-concept had any bearing on the students' degree of satisfaction. Several of the questions produced significant results that lead to an improvement on the picture of conflict management in the classroom.

An Analysis of Conflict Management

in Grades 3 through 8

The effective management of conflict has long been recognized as a key element in the development of a healthy, productive society. Yet research in this area remains fragmented. There is still much uncertainty about how conflict should be studied. Most research investigations of conflict management are conducted in a task-oriented group discussion or in the context of a business situation (Neilsen, 1972; Likert and Likert, 1976). It is much easier, perhaps, to see and study conflict among adults competing for various ideas, activities, etc. than it is in other social settings. Nonetheless, the importance of this construct as it relates to children and education must no longer be overlooked. As noted by Frank, "conflict among youth involves a higher affective investment than among adults" (1973, p. 247).

The rationale behind the choice of conflict management as a key variable worthy of greater study grows from the continued questioning of the role of the teacher in the classroom (Duffner, Long, and Fagen, 1979; McCroskey and Richmond, 1983). Since institutionalized education is a communication process in which the instructor largely controls and assumes responsibility for student learning, the importance of communication in defining a teaching style that promotes a healthy learning environment cannot be understated. The belief that communication contains

both context and relational components (Watzlawick, Beavin and Jackson, 1967) is carried into the classroom where teachers, through their attempts to manage conflict, must simultaneously deal with both cognitive and affective outcomes. Not only must the teacher be concerned with transferring accurate information to the student but also be sensitive to the development of self-concept. This is especially true with the younger adolescent. Teachers need to define their role in such a way that they are able to accept a child's feelings while at the same time criticizing the student's ideas. This behavior, one that serves the dual function of correcting the students on the cognitive level, while at the same time supporting them on the affective level, can most clearly be seen through the teacher's attempts to manage the conflicts that occur in the classroom. Yet the evidence suggests that conflicts are shunned in many classrooms (DeCecco and Richards, 1974). In addition, when conflicts do arise, both teachers and students alike are not adquately prepared to effectively manage that conflict (Johnson, 1970; Blake and Mouton, 1970; Deutsch, 1973). This can seriously inhibit the classroom experience. "By avoiding and suppressing certain types of conflicts teachers lose valuable opportunities to increase student motivation, creative insight, cognitive development, and learning. Conflicts have the potential for producing both highly constructive or highly destructive outcomes, depending on how they are managed" (Johnson and Johnson, 1979, p. 51-52). At its worst, poor conflict management can arrest or delay a child's social-emotional growth. At its

best, good conflict management can help the child grow and move into deeper, more meaningful relationships with others.

Rationale and Research Questions

Despite the advice given by numerous authors designed to improve the teacher's ability to manage conflict in the classroom, positive results have not been forthcoming. With such a practical problem affecting a wide population one would think more attention would be given to this process. Yet, the area of conflict management in the classroom remains void of any systematic, empirical approach whereby the effectiveness of various strategies might be examined. It was only within the past fifteen years that any research attempting a merger between conflict management and the classroom was conducted.

Since very little research has been done toward bridging the gap between conflict in the business or task-oriented group and conflict in the classroom, more work needs to be undertaken in order to discover the effects various conflict management strategies have on a teacher's ability to manage the classroom more effectively. There is enough evidence to suggest that conflict and controversy can be important teaching strategies for increasing learning and intellectual development.

The effective management of conflict in the classroom directly relates to one of the most timely issues facing educators today. Whether it is called conflict resolution or management, classroom management or discipline, the need for students to behave civilly in the classroom has been identified by numerous educational treatises as one of the major concerns of

education during the 1980's. A large part of today's problem is that teachers and administrators are less willing to force students to do homework, perform up to standards and accept criticism with civility (Cohen, 1982; Oldenquist, 1983). The most important characteristics of schools that encourage academic achievement are strong instructional leadership and a safe, orderly climate. Schools can contribute to their students' academic success by establishing, communicating and enforcing fair and consistent discipline policies and this is where effective management of conflict can play a major part.

Hopefully, by identifying what types of conflict management strategies teachers use most often and the degree of satisfaction felt by the students, teachers, eventually, would be able to use the various strategies to their greatest advantage. The end result would be a teacher who is better equipped to deal with problems in the classroom and deal with them in such a way as to promote a more efficient, more effective learning experience.

In addition to creating a more pleasant learning environment, results of the study of the methods teachers use in managing conflict in the classroom may permit generalizations to broader principles of social interaction. This would have implications for a wide range of practical problems. Lastly, such a study may provide the possibility for more fruitful exploration of the patterns of interaction that occur between teacher and student in the classroom.

With respect to the previous studies and the information available about conflict in the classroom the following research

questions were posed:

1) What conflict management strategy do students most prefer their teachers use in dealing with student-student conflict?
2) What conflict management strategy do students most prefer their teachers use in dealing with student-teacher conflict?
3) Do the strategies used to manage student-student conflict change across grade levels?
4) Do the strategies used to manage student-teacher conflict change across grade levels?
5) To what extent are students satisfied with the strategy their teacher uses to manage student-student conflict?
6) To what extent are students satisfied with the strategy their teacher uses to manage student-teacher conflict?
7) What is the relationship between pupil's self-concept and the conflict management style used?
8) What is the relationship between pupil's self-concept and satisfaction with the conflict management style used?

Methods and Procedures

Subjects

Subjects for this study were student enrolled in grades 3 through 8 of a school system located outside of a small, midwestern city. An N=178 was obtained through sampling of two (2) classes per grade level.

Measure Development

In order to answer the research questions posed in this study it became apparent that a list of conflict management strategies from which the subjects could choose would need to be generated. Based on a review of the literature certain strategies such as the invocation of rules and role-reversal were repeatedly mentioned in those articles listing conflict management strategies. To ensure consistency with the strategies being used in task-oriented groups and businesses a list of six (6) strategies was constructed.

The strategies selected were taken from a list authored by Walton (1969) and later adapted by Neilsen (1972). Walton's list of strategies has been widely accepted for use in textbooks (Daft, 1983), business and multi-media programs on the productive management of conflict (Phelps, Vogel and Friedenberg, 1983).

The wording of these strategies has been altered slightly in order to make certain that the reading level of the strategy corresponded to the approximate reading level of the subjects being sampled. Using the SMOG readability formula (McLaughlin, 1969) the questionnaire containing the six management strategies yielded a readability level equivalent to 4.4 grades.

In order to improve on this result and more importantly, to promote maximum understanding of all the words and phrases used in the measuring instrument, a pilot study was conducted to determine more clearly student comprehension levels on several of the key words and phrases found in the questionnaire.

Based on a series of videotaped interviews between this

author and a group of ten (10) students in grades 3, 4, and 5 it was concluded that some of the words, although appropriate for the reading level, were inappropriate for this study. These words were then replaced with similar words that the students could more readily identify and explain.

Data Collection

A revised version of the questionnaire, based on the pilot study results, was the measurement device which was administered to the final group of subjects. Each class was sampled individually during the homeroom period. The choice of homeroom was to help to control for any student bias which might have been present due to the particular subject matter taught in the class. After the homeroom teacher read a brief statement advising the students of the nature of the experiment the test questionnaires were distibuted.

Self-Esteem Inventory

To answer the research questions concerning the relationship between pupil's self-concept and the conflict management style practiced in the classroom, Stanley Coopersmith's (1967) Self-Esteem Inventory was selected. This rating scale contains 58 items and can be divided into four (4) subscales: academic, parents, peers, and social. Subjects are requested to check each statement either as "like me" or "unlike me". These statements tap a wide area of self conception and are written in positive and negative forms to obviate the acquiescence response set. Since this study focused on school-aged children, the School Short Form was administered. This form was developed to provide

an alternative to the 58 item form and was constructed based on an item analysis of the School Form and includes the twenty-five School Form items that showed the highest item-total score correlations.

Statistical Analysis

In order to answer Research Questions 1-6, a chi-square statistical procedure was used to compare cell means of the student grade level and the conflict management strategy selected.

Research Question 7 was answered via an analysis of variance statistical procedure. This test was used to determine whether the conflict management strategy selected had any effect on the level of satisfaction felt by the students. Analysis of variance specifically tests the hypothesis that there are no differences between K sample means. An assumption of analysis of variance states that variances between samples be equal. To test for homogeneity of variance an F-ratio comparison test was run.

Question 8 concerning the relationship between pupil's self-concept and satisfaction with the conflict management style used in the classroom was also answered by an analysis of variance procedure. In this case a 6 x 3 matrix of 6 levels of satisfaction by 3 levels of self-concept was produced. Again, an F-ratio comparison test was employed to determine homogeneity of variance.

All statistical procedures were performed at the alpha = .05 level.

Results of the Research Questions

Research Question 1, What conflict management strategy do students most prefer their teachers use in dealing with student-student conflict?, asked students to indicate their preference of strategies. Option B, the invoking of class rules, was the most popular answer receiving 38 responses (29%). Closely behind with 34 responses (21%) were stategies A, physical separation, and strategy F, mutuality of concern. The computed chi-square for the student's preferred strategy for managing student-student conflict $X^2(25, N=161)=17.74$, $p.>.05$ failed to discern a significant difference. Table 1 presents the frequency distribution of the responses to Research Question 1.

Research Question 2 is quite similar to the first question except that it asks for the students' preferences in managing student-teacher conflict rather than student-student conflict as posed in question 1. For this research question strategy F, mutuality of concern, was the most frequently mentioned. Cited 48 times (28%) strategy F finished ahead of strategy D, mediation by a superior, which received 35 response (21%) and strategy B, invoking class rules, with 33 responses (19%). The computed chi-square for the students' preferred strategy for managing student-teacher conflict $X^2(25, N=171)=65.44$, $p.<.001$ revealed a significant difference between the preferences for strategies. Table 2 presents the frequency distribution of the responses to Research Question 2.

Research Question 3 asked if the strategies used to manage student-student conflict changed across grade levels. The data

TABLE 1

Frequencies and Contingency Table for Proportionality of Preferred Student-Student Conflict Management Strategies by Grade Levels

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	GRADE 3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Physical Separation	7 (4.7)	6 (5.5)	7 (5.3)	3 (6.1)	5 (6.6)	6 (5.9)	34
Invocation of Rules	5 (5.2)	7 (6.1)	5 (5.9)	9 (6.8)	9 (7.3)	3 (6.6)	38
Mediation by Equal	2 (2.7)	3 (3.2)	3 (3.1)	5 (3.6)	3 (3.9)	4 (3.5)	20
Mediation by Superior	2 (2.1)	2 (2.4)	2 (2.3)	0 (2.7)	4 (2.9)	5 (2.6)	15
Role Reversal	4 (2.7)	2 (3.2)	3 (3.1)	3 (3.6)	4 (3.9)	4 (3.5)	20
Mutuality of Concern	2 (4.7)	6 (5.5)	5 (5.3)	9 (6.1)	6 (6.6)	6 (5.9)	34
	22	26	25	29	31	28	161

Chi-square = 17.74 with 25 df, p. > .05

Number in parenthesis is the expected frequency

TABLE 2

Frequencies and Contingency Table for Proportionality of Preferred Student-Teacher Conflict Management Strategies by Grade Levels

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	GRADE 3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Physical Separation	1 (2.5)	5 (2.7)	1 (3.2)	6 (3.6)	1 (3.3)	4 (2.7)	18
Invocation of Rules	3 (4.6)	4 (5.0)	10 (5.8)	7 (6.6)	6 (6.0)	3 (5.0)	33
Mediation by Equal	0 (1.4)	3 (1.5)	1 (1.8)	1 (2.0)	5 (1.8)	0 (1.5)	10
Mediation by Superior	15 (4.9)	7 (5.3)	2 (6.1)	2 (7.0)	3 (6.3)	6 (5.3)	35
Role Reversal	2 (3.8)	4 (4.1)	6 (4.7)	5 (5.3)	3 (4.9)	7 (4.1)	27
Mutuality of Concern	3 (6.7)	3 (7.3)	10 (8.4)	13 (9.6)	13 (8.7)	6 (7.3)	48
	24	26	30	34	31	26	171

Chi-square = 65.44 with 25 df, p. < .001

Number in paranthesis is the expected frequency

reported by the students as to their perceptions of the actual strategies practiced indicated that Strategy A, physical separation, was the most prevalent method used in grades 3 and 8. Strategy A received 17 responses (68%) in grade 3 and 12 responses (44%) in grade 8. Strategy A was also the most frequently mentioned strategy across all grade levels combined with a total response of 56 (32%). For grades 5, 6, and 7 strategy F, mutuality of concern, was the leading method for managing student-student conflict. Strategy D, mediation by a superior, was mentioned most often by those in grade 4. The computed chi-square $X^2(25, N=175)=70.86$, $p.<.001$ revealed a significant difference between the preferences for strategies. The strategies, with the exception of grade 8, changed somewhat in that from grade 3 to grade 5 and continuing through grades 6 and 7, the strategies selected moved from the more behavioralistic solution of Strategy A, physical separation, to Strategy F, mutuality of concern, which focuses on conflict management through the modification or change of individual attitudes. In addition, when examined by individual grade levels, the most frequently cited strategy produced a computed chi-square which revealed significant differences between the preferences for strategies. Table 3 presents the frequency distribution of the responses to Research Question 3.

Research Question 4 asked if the strategies used to manage student-teacher conflict changed across grade levels. The data reported by the students as to their perceptions of the actual strategies practiced indicated that Strategy F, mutuality of

TABLE 3

Frequencies and Contingency Table for Proportionality of Actual Student-Teacher Conflict Management Strategies by Grade Levels

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	GRADE 3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Physical Separation	17 (8.0)	7 (8.6)	6 (9.6)	11 (11.)	3 (10.)	12 (8.6)	56
Invocation of Rules	1 (4.1)	2 (4.5)	11 (5.0)	8 (5.8)	5 (5.1)	2 (4.5)	29
Mediation by Equal	0 (.9)	2 (.9)	1 (1.0)	0 (1.2)	3 (1.1)	0 (.9)	6
Mediation by Superior	3 (4.9)	12 (5.3)	0 (5.8)	2 (6.8)	9 (6.0)	8 (5.3)	34
Role Reversal	0 (.4)	0 (.5)	0 (.5)	1 (.6)	1 (.5)	1 (.5)	3
Mutuality of Concern	4 (6.7)	4 (7.3)	12 (8.1)	13 (9.4)	10 (8.3)	4 (7.3)	47
	25	27	30	35	31	27	175

Chi-square = 70.86 with 25 df, p. < .001

Number in paranthesis is the expected frequency

Grade 3 Chi-square = 50.60 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 4 Chi-square = 21.23 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 5 Chi-square = 49.40 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 6 Chi-square = 26.57 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 7 Chi-square = 12.55 with 5 df, p. < .05

Grade 8 Chi-square = 23.89 with 5 df, p. < .005

concern, was the most prevalent method used in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8. Strategy F received 16 responses (53%) in grade 5, 18 responses (55%) in grade 6, 15 responses (48%) in grade 7 and 15 responses (58%) in grade 8. Strategy F was also the most frequently mentioned strategy across all grade levels with a total response of 74 (43%). For grade 3, Strategy B, invoking class rules, was cited most often with 12 responses (48%). Strategy D, mediation by a superior, with 8 responses (30%) was the most mentioned strategy in grade 4. As can be seen from the data, the strategies did change across grade levels moving from the more behavioralistic response of Strategy B, invoking of class rules, to Strategy F, mutuality of concern. Strategy F represents a management solution based on attitudinal change. The computed chi-square $X^2(25, N=172)=53.77$, $p.<.0007$ revealed a significant difference between the preferences for strategies. Also, when examined by individual grade levels, the most frequently cited strategy produced a computed chi-square which revealed a significant difference between the preferences for strategies. Table 4 presents the frequency distribution of the responses to Research Question 4.

Research Questions 5 and 6 are quite similar in that they ask the student to indicate the level of satisfaction that they feel with their teacher's attempts to manage conflict in the classroom. Research Question 5 focuses on managing student-student conflict while Research Question 6 examines the management of student-teacher conflict. Of the 175 responses to Research Question 5, 51 or 29% answered that they were extremely

TABLE 4

Frequencies and Contingency Table for Proportionality of Actual Student-Teacher Conflict Management Strategies by Grade Levels

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	GRADE 3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Physical Separation	5 (3.6)	2 (3.9)	4 (4.4)	2 (4.8)	7 (4.5)	5 (3.8)	25
Invocation of Rules	12 (6.0)	7 (6.4)	6 (7.2)	6 (7.9)	8 (7.4)	2 (6.2)	41
Mediation by Equal	2 (1.2)	0 (1.3)	3 (1.4)	2 (1.5)	1 (1.4)	0 (1.2)	8
Mediation by Superior	2 (2.3)	8 (2.5)	1 (2.8)	2 (3.1)	0 (2.9)	3 (2.4)	16
Role Reversal	1 (1.2)	3 (1.3)	0 (1.4)	3 (1.5)	0 (1.4)	1 (1.2)	8
Mutuality of Concern	3 (11.)	7 (12.)	16 (13.)	18 (14.)	15 (13.)	15 (11.)	74
	25	27	30	33	31	26	172

Chi-square = 53.77 with 25 df, p. < .001

Number in paranthesis is the expected frequency

Grade 3 Chi-square = 20.23 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 4 Chi-square = 11.89 with 5 df, p. < .05

Grade 5 Chi-square = 33.60 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 6 Chi-square = 36.29 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 7 Chi-square = 34.61 with 5 df, p. < .005

Grade 8 Chi-square = 40.10 with 5 df, p. < .005

satisfied, 49 or 28% indicated that they were very satisfied and 38 or 22% responded that they were satisfied with the strategy that their teacher uses to manage student-student conflict. This accounts for 79% of the students indicating some degree of satisfaction as opposed to 37 students (21%) answering with some degree of dissatisfaction. The computed chi-square for the students' satisfaction with their teacher's attempts at managing student-student conflict failed to distinguish a significant difference $X^2(25, N=175)=32.83$, $p.>.05$. Table 5 presents the frequency distribution of the responses to Research Question 5.

The mean level of satisfaction for each grade level was analyzed. Grade 7 with a mean score of 1.68 was the most satisfied group of students, while grade 4 was the least satisfied. In fact, with a mean score of 3.63 their responses indicate a significant degree of dissatisfaction with their teachers' attempts to manage student-student conflict. Table 6 presents the means, standard deviations and sample sizes for the six grade levels and the student levels of satisfaction with the management of student-student conflict. Analysis of variance for the effects of the conflict management strategy selected to manage student-student conflict on satisfaction indicated a significant effect $F(5, 169)=5.82$, $p.<.0001$. Results of the analysis of variance procedure can be found in Table 7.

Just as Research Question 5 is similar to Research Question 6 so to are the results. Of the 173 responses 48 or 28% indicated that they were extremely satisfied, 44 or 25% answered that they were very satisfied and 42 or 24% responded that they were

TABLE 5

Frequencies and Contingency Table for Proportionality of Satisfaction with Student-Student Conflict Management Strategies by Grade Levels

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION	GRADE 3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Extremely Satisfied	7 (7.3)	4 (7.9)	8 (8.2)	8 (10.)	16 (9.0)	8 (8.2)	51
Very Satisfied	4 (7.0)	3 (7.6)	10 (7.8)	13 (10.)	10 (8.7)	9 (7.8)	49
Satisfied	10 (5.4)	8 (5.9)	5 (6.1)	7 (7.8)	4 (6.7)	4 (6.1)	38
Unsatisfied	0 (2.3)	3 (2.5)	3 (2.6)	6 (3.3)	1 (2.8)	3 (2.6)	16
Very Unsatisfied	1 (1.0)	2 (1.1)	1 (1.1)	0 (1.4)	0 (1.2)	3 (1.1)	7
Extremely Unsatisfied	3 (2.0)	7 (2.2)	1 (2.2)	2 (2.9)	0 (2.5)	1 (2.2)	14
	25	27	28	36	31	28	175

Chi-square = 32.83 with 25 df, p. > .05

Number in parenthesis is the expected frequency

TABLE 6

Means, Standard Deviations and Sample Sizes for the Six Grade Levels and Student Satisfaction with Management of Student-Student Conflict

GRADE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	N
3	2.72af	1.5948	25
4	3.63abcde	1.7791	27
5	2.36b	1.3113	28
6	2.53cg	1.3199	36
7	1.68dfg	0.8321	31
8	2.54e	1.4778	28

Means with the same subscript are significantly different p. < .05. However, some people would suggest that when making multiple comparisons Ryan's correction should be used.

TABLE 7

Analysis of Variance for the Effects of the Conflict Management Strategy Selected to Manage Student-Student Conflict on Satisfaction

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	56.86	5	11.37		
Within Groups	330.48	169	1.96		
Total	387.34	174		5.82	.0001

satisfied. This accounts for 77% of the students indicating some degree of satisfaction while the remaining 39 students (23%) noted their dissatisfaction with their teachers' attempts to manage student-teacher conflict. The computed chi-square $X^2(25, N=173)=30.83$, $p.>.05$ failed to discern a significant difference. Table 8 presents the frequency distribution of the responses for Research Question 6.

Again, grade 7 with a mean score of 1.74 was the most satisfied group and grade 4 with a mean score of 3.67 was the least satisfied. Also the level of dissatisfaction was such that it was significantly different from all of the other grade levels. The means, standard deviations and sample sizes for the six grade levels and the student levels of satisfaction with the management of student-teacher conflict can be found in Table 9. The analysis of variance for the effects of the conflict management strategy selected to manage student-teacher conflict on satisfaction indicated a significant effect $F(5, 167)=5.66$, $p.<.0001$. Results of the analysis of variance procedure can be found in Table 10.

Research Question 7 asked if there was any relationship between a pupil's self-concept and the conflict management strategy practiced by the teacher. There are two parts to this question, one part dealing with student-student conflict and the other with student-teacher conflict. For managing student-student conflict the most frequent response (33%) given by those with high self-concept was Strategy F, mutuality of concern. Following behind with 28% of the responses was Strategy A, physical separation. Those with moderate levels of self-concept favored

TABLE 8

Frequencies and Contingency Table for Proportionality of Satisfaction with Student-Teacher Conflict Management Strategies by Grade Levels

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION	GRADE 3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Extremely Satisfied	10 (6.7)	1 (7.5)	9 (7.8)	5 (10.)	16 (8.6)	7 (7.5)	48
Very Satisfied	3 (6.1)	5 (6.8)	7 (7.1)	12 (9.2)	9 (7.9)	8 (6.8)	44
Satisfied	8 (5.8)	9 (6.6)	6 (6.8)	9 (8.6)	4 (7.5)	6 (6.6)	42
Unsatisfied	0 (2.5)	4 (2.8)	2 (2.9)	7 (3.7)	2 (3.2)	3 (2.8)	18
Very Unsatisfied	0 (.82)	3 (.93)	1 (.96)	0 (1.2)	0 (1.1)	2 (.93)	6
Extremely Unsatisfied	3 (2.1)	5 (2.3)	3 (2.4)	3 (3.1)	0 (2.7)	1 (2.3)	15
	24	27	28	36	31	27	173

Chi-square = 30.83 with 25 df, p. > .05

Number in paranthesis is the expected frequency

TABLE 9

Means, Standard Deviations and Sample Sizes for the Six Grade Levels and Student Satisfaction with Management of Student-Teacher Conflict

GRADE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	N
3	2.42a	1.6396	24
4	3.67abcde	1.4936	27
5	2.57b	1.62	28
6	2.83cf	1.3628	36
7	1.74df	0.9289	31
8	2.56e	1.396	27

Means with the same subscript are significantly different p. < .05. However, some people would suggest that when making multiple comparisons Ryan's correction should be used.

TABLE 10

Analysis of Variance for the Effects of the Conflict Management Strategy Selected to Manage Student-Teacher Conflict on Satisfaction

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	56.29	5	11.26		
Within Groups	332.29	167	1.99		
Total	388.58	172		5.66	.0001

(35%) Strategy A, physical separation, and Strategy F, mutuality of concern (25%). There was no clear favorite strategy for those with low levels of self-concept as Strategy D, mediation by a superior with 31% narrowly edged out Strategy A, physical separation, and Strategy B, invoking of class rules, each with 23% of the responses. Analysis of variance for the effects of self-concept on the conflict management strategy selected to manage student-student conflict failed to indicate a significant effect, $F(2, 172)=.72$, $p.>.05$. Results of the analysis of variance procedure can be found in Table 11.

For managing student-teacher conflict the students with high levels of self-concept again favored (47%) Strategy F, mutuality of concern. Strategy B was the next most popular with 28% of the responses. Unlike their preference for Strategy A, physical separation, to manage student-student conflict, those with moderate levels of self-concept felt Strategy F, mutuality of concern, was better suited to manage student-teacher conflict. Forty-three percent answered with Strategy F while Strategy B, invoking of class rules, was second most popular with 21%. Those students with low levels of self-concept also had a different preference for managing student-teacher conflict. Strategy A, physical separation, with 31% of the responses was the most frequently cited followed by Strategies B, invoking of rules, D, mediation by a superior, and F, mutuality of concern, each with 23% of the responses. Analysis of variance for the effects of self-concept on the conflict management strategy selected to manage student-teacher conflict failed to indicate a significant

TABLE 11

Analysis of Variance for the Effects of the Conflict Management Strategy Selected to Manage Student-Student Conflict on Self-Concept

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	5.93	2	2.97		
Within Groups	706.93	172	4.11		
Total	712.86	174		0.72	.49

effect $F(2, 169)=1.32$, $p.>.05$. Results of the analysis of variance procedure can be found in Table 12.

Research Question 8, also a two-part question, asked whether there was a relationship between pupil's self-concept and satisfaction with the conflict management style used. For managing student-student conflict the high self-concept students were most satisfied (2.32) followed by the moderate self-concept students with 2.55. Those students with low levels of self-concept were the least satisfied with a 3.62 level of satisfaction. This level of dissatisfaction was significantly different from both the high and the moderate self-concept students. The analysis of variance for the effects of self-concept on the level of satisfaction with the conflict management strategy selected to manage student-student conflict indicated a significant effect $F(2, 172)=4.20$, $p.<.017$. Results of the analysis of variance procedure can be found in Table 13.

The second part of Research Question 8 dealt with the management of student-teacher conflict. Again, the high self-concept students were the most satisfied (2.45) with the moderate self-concept students next (2.58) and the low self-concept students indicating the least satisfaction (3.77). This level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction was also significantly different at the .05 level from the levels for both the high and moderate self-concept students. The analysis of variance for the effects of self-concept on the level of satisfaction with the conflict management strategy selected to manage student-teacher conflict indicated a significant effect $F(2, 170)=4.38$, $p.<.014$.

TABLE 12

Analysis of Variance for the Effects of the Conflict Management Strategy Selected to Manage Student-Teacher Conflict on Self-Concept

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	10.77	2	5.38		
Within Groups	689.77	169	4.08		
Total	700.54	171		1.32	.27

TABLE 13

Analysis of Variance for the Effects of Self-Concept on the Satisfaction with the Conflict Management Strategy Selected to Manage Student-Student Conflict

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	18.02	2	9.01		
Within Groups	369.32	172	2.15		
Total	387.34	174		4.20	.017

Results of the analysis of variance procedure can be found in Table 14.

Discussion

As reported in the previous section, the research results concerning student preference for conflict management strategy were mixed. While no significant ideal strategy was found to manage student-student conflict, mutuality of concern was identified as being significantly different in managing the conflicts between student and teacher.

The research questions concerning the changing of strategies across grade levels also brought mixed results. For managing student-student conflict the responses did show movement from the behavioral solution of Strategy A, physical separation, indicated as used most in grade 3, to the attitudinal change solution of Strategy F, mutuality of concern, practiced most often in grades 5, 6, and 7. It is in grade 8 that a reversal takes place with Strategy A, physical separation, being the technique used most often. This may be due to the more "physical" conflicts that take place between teenagers. Physical conflicts require a physical solution. In this case, separation of the individuals.

The next two research questions asked whether or not students were satisfied with their teachers' attempts at managing conflict. Regardless of whether it was student-student conflict or student-teacher conflict the vast majority of students were satisfied with the exception of the fourth graders whose level of dissatisfaction was significantly different from all of the other grade levels on both the student-student measure and the

TABLE 14

Analysis of Variance for the Effects of Self-Concept on the Satisfaction with the Conflict Management Strategy Selected to Manage Student-Teacher Conflict

Source of Variance	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	19.06	2	9.53		
Within Groups	369.52	170	2.17		
Total	388.58	172		4.38	.014

student-teacher measure.

Research Question 7 dealt with the relationship between pupil's self-conflict and the conflict management strategy practiced by the teacher. For both student-student conflict and student-teacher conflict there was no significant strategy preferred. No two groups were found to be significantly different.

The final research question concerned the relationship between pupil's self-concept and the level of satisfaction with the conflict management strategy used in their classroom. The results indicated that for managing both student-student conflict and student-teacher conflict those students identified as possessing low levels of self-concept were significantly more dissatisfied than either the high self-concept group or the moderate self-concept group.

Although the findings of this research are not as straightforward as they might be, several of the results do improve on the picture of conflict management in the classroom. Strategy F, mutuality of concern, was the conflict management technique that was most often identified by the students. The fact that this strategy was the significant preference in managing student-teacher conflict points out to teachers the students' desires to have the teacher more personally affected by the choices the teacher makes when managing conflict between themself and a student.

Strategy B, the invoking of class rules, also received considerable support from the student. For the student it spelled

out clear behavioral responsibilities. It may be in the teacher's best interest to post rules throughout the classroom.

Hopefully now that certain strategies have been identified, teachers may be in a better position to use these conflict managing techniques to their advantage in dealing with problems that arise in the classroom. By effective application, the teacher should be making improvements toward creation of a more pleasant, more productive educational environment for both student and teacher alike.

REFERENCES

Blake, R. & Mouton, J. (1970). The fifth achievement. Journal of Applied Behavior Science, 6(4), 413-426.

Cohen, M. (1982). Effective schools: Accumulating research findings. American Education, 18(1), 13-16.

Coopersmith, S. (1967). The antecedents of self-esteem. San Francisco: Freeman.

Daft, R. (1983). Organizational theory and design. St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company.

DeCecco, J. & Richards, A. (1974). Growing pains: Uses of school conflict. New York: Aberdeen Press.

Deutsch, M. (1973). Conflicts: Productive and destructive. In F. Jandt (Ed.), Conflict resolution through communication. New York: Harper & Row.

Duffner, E., Long, N. & Fagen, S. (1979). Reducing stress of students in conflict. Pointer, 24(1), 61-68.

Frank, A. (1973). Conflict in the classroom. In F. Jandt (Ed.), Conflict resolution through communication. New York: Harper & Row.

Johnson, D. (1971). Effects of the order of expressing warmth and anger on the actor and the listener. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 18(6), 571-578.

Johnson, D. & Johnson, R. (1979). Conflict in the classroom: Controversy and learning. Review of Educational Research, 49(1), 51-70.

Likert, R. & Likert, J. (1976). New ways of managing conflict. New York: McGraw-Hill.

McCroskey, J. & Richmond, V. (1983). Power in the classroom I: Teacher and student perceptions. Communication Education, 32(2), 175-184.

McLaughlin, G. (1969). SMOG: Grading a new readability formula. Journal of Reading, 12(8), 639-646.

Neilsen, E. (1972). Understanding and managing intergroup conflict. In J. Lorsch and P. Lawrence (Eds.), Managing group and intergroup relations. New York: The Dorsey Press.

Phelps, B., Vogel, R. & Friedenberg, R. (1983, November). Resolving conflict productively. Paper presented at the meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Chicago.

Walton, R. (1969). Interpersonal peacemaking: Confrontation and third party consultation. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. & Jackson, D. (1967). Pragmatics of human communication. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.